Pray For Jesus

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BY C. H. SPURGEON, AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"Prayer also shall be made for Him continually." Psalm 72:15.

HAVING on one or two occasions made use of the phrase, "praying for King Jesus," I have been somewhat surprised to find that it was not understood, and I have been rather astonished at receiving several notes asking for an explanation of what I supposed to be a matter of common knowledge. It seemed to hearers and readers of my sermons as if the phrase must be a mistake, as if it could not really be a correct thing to do—to pray for the Lord Jesus Christ. And yet one moment's reflection would have shown them that the expression is Scriptural, that you have it here if you have it nowhere else, "prayer also shall be made for Him continually."

Our Lord is undoubtedly intended, in this passage, for He it is in whom all nations of the earth shall be blessed, and whose name shall continue as long as the sun. It is quite easy to see how we could pray for Christ if He were still on the earth. I suppose that when He was a Child His parents prayed for Him. They needed not to pray some of the prayers which we offer for our offspring, for He was sinless, but I can scarcely imagine that a mother's love could have been restrained from seeking the richest blessings for her heavenly Child. And when He grew up, and came among men, and His lovely Character began to be known, how could His disciples do otherwise than pray that He might be speeded in His good work?

Can we suppose them to have been loyal to the Master if they did not often join their prayer with His that His kingdom might come? Indeed, what is the prayer which He has taught us, "Our Father which are in Heaven," but in a certain sense, prayer for Jesus? "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth, even as it is in Heaven"—it is Christ's kingdom, and Christ's will, as well as the will of the Father, and the kingdom of the Father. That great cry which went up in the streets of Jerusalem when Jesus, in the days of His flesh, rode through them in state was a prayer—"Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord." Did not the multitude thus implore blessing upon the head of Him who came in Jehovah's name?

His disciples might have done well if they had prayed for Him and with Him in Gethsemane, and it was a part of His griefs to find that they could not watch with Him one hour. It was ordained that He should tread the winepress alone. I think we shall all see that the same spirit which made holy women minister to Him of their substance—which made the daughters of Salem weep for Him as He was led to His Crucifixion—must have prompted all His sincere followers to say Amen to this prayer, "Father, glorify Your Son"—and what was this but praying for Him?

But it will be said, "None of these things apply to Him now." My Brothers and Sisters, think a little, and you will see that we can still pray for Jesus, and you will remember that in our hymns we often do so! As, for instance, when we sing—

"Let all that dwell above the sky,
And air, and earth, and seas,
Conspire to lift Your glories high,
And speak Your endless praise."

For albeit that He is, in one sense, exalted to the utmost height of glory and reigns victorious over His enemies, yet, in another sense He is here in the midst of His chosen host striving with principalities and powers. "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world," is the blessed assurance that Jesus is our Captain in the great fight of faith, and is still present in the battlefield.

His great cause is here! His enterprise and business are here below! The work which He undertook to accomplish is not yet accomplished in the person of every one of His elect. His blood has been fully shed and His Atonement has been perfected, but those for whom the Atonement was made are not yet all gathered in. Many sheep He has which are not yet of His fold. We are therefore to pray for Him, that the good work which He has undertaken may be prospered, and that one by one those whom His Father gave Him may be brought to reconciliation and to eternal life.

Brethren, the Lord Jesus Christ describes Himself as being still persecuted and still suffering. He said to Saul, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" He calls His people Himself! They are His mystical body, and in praying for the Church we pray for Christ! He is the Head of the body, and you cannot pray for the body except you pray for the Head! We must put them all into one prayer. He is still struggling with the hosts of darkness in His Church. He is still striving for the victory over sin in His people, and His people are waiting and longing for His second advent which shall fulfill their brightest hopes.

We must still pray for Him, not personally, but relatively—for His cause, for His kingdom, for His Gospel, for His people, for His blood-bought ones who as yet are in the ruins of the Fall—for His second coming, and glorious reign. In this sense, I take it, the text is meant that "prayer also shall be made for Him continually." And now, Brothers and Sisters, I want, keeping to the one thought of the text, to show the light which gleams from it.

I. And, in the first place, if it is so, if we do, indeed, pray for Christ continually, how this thought ELEVATES THE TONE OF OUR PRAYERS! Think awhile—there are some prayers which are terribly narrow, selfish, and contracted— the suppliant mentions nothing but his own experience, or, at the widest, the trials of his household. He goes through his own private interests, and rehearses the sorrows of his own little sphere. He repeats them. He never seems to get beyond them.

At family prayer in such a case, "Give us this day our daily bread" seems to be the major petition, and, "Forgive us our debts" is perhaps the only other. The man prays like the blind horse at the mill—he travels round, and round, and round continually the same circle of prayer. Now, if that Brother could but get into his mind once and for all that there were a great many others to pray for beside himself and beside his family—if he could remember that Paul wills, in the name of the Holy Spirit, that prayer should be made for all ranks and conditions of men—if such a man could hear all the ministers of Christ saying, "Brethren, pray for us," and could remember that we are to pray for all the household of faith, why that would tend to get the man off his narrow selfishness!

And if he could grasp the still higher thought that in coming to the Mercy Seat we may come for Christ as well as by Christ, and may have a prayer to pray even for Him who is the Apostle, and High Priest of our profession, he would surely look upon prayer as being altogether a different thing from what he had conceived it to be! He would get out of that narrow rut and begin to pray something more worthy of a child of God! Full conviction of this thought would save us from selfishness in connection with those prayers which have a wider circumference but have their secret center in ourselves.

We do pray for the conversion of sinners, but I have been afraid, sometimes, lest I have been praying for sinners to be converted under my own ministry, with the view of being thought a useful preacher. And it is not impossible that some of you, in your classes, seeking to do good, may have desired usefulness with the view of wearing it as a jewel to ornament yourselves—or, if you sought not honor for self exactly—it may have been for some honored person whom your affection has made to be part of yourselves.

Now I do not think I ought to desire conversions for the sake of my minister, even though his ministry may be very dear to me, nor for the honor of my Christian Sister or Christian Brother, though their work may be exceedingly precious in my sight. I must take care that I supplicate for souls to be saved, and the kingdom of Christ to be advanced with no sinister aim mingling with the prayer.

Now if I pray it for Christ, if I pray that sinners may be converted for His glory, to show forth the power of His Gospel, to let men see that the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in His hands, then I shall ask for the mercies which I need with a better Grace and be less likely to "have not, because" I "have asked amiss." And do you not see, also, how this would lift us beyond the narrow hounds of sectarianism? I mean just this—there is a possibility of desiring the extension of the Savior's kingdom only in one direction—namely, in that direction in which we are most interested. It is right for a man to love that body of Christians with which he is most intimately connected, and to love them best because he believes that they are most faithful to the Truth of God—but he should not desire their increase merely for the prevalence of a party name!

He must desire it for the increase of the one great universal Church of Christ, and for the extension of the Truth of God because it is the Truth of God—not because it happens to be a Truth which he has received. I heard a speech the other day by a beloved Wesleyan Brother, and it did me much good to hear it. He said, "If God is pleased to scourge us Wesleyans for our sins, and to withhold a large measure of success, I will then pray that he would bless you Baptists, and make up through you what the Church may lose through us." When I heard him say it and knew he meant it, I could not but feel my soul knit to such a man—a man who loves the Church of Christ and loves it for Christ's sake, for the sake of souls—and for the Truth's sake. This is just how all of us ought to feel—that we wish to see all the Churches multiply and increase—and wherever Truth is preached, wish to see that Truth prevail.

Dear Friends, if we adopt the thought that we must pray for conversions for Jesus' sake, we shall be uplifted from the realm of jealous bickering! We shall say, "No, I do not desire conversions because of that Church, or that man, or that body, nor even merely because of the whole Church itself! But I desire the extension of the Truth of God for Christ. I pray for Him." Your minds will be enlarged, your souls will be expanded, and you will have come to the stature of men in Christ Jesus.

Moreover, I have noticed, dear Friends, that when we can ask for any deliverance as for Christ, we may pray very earnestly against an evil without any bitterness mingling with the prayer. It is the duty of every Christian to pray against Antichrist, and as to what Antichrist is. No sane man ought to raise a question. If it is not the Popery in the Church of Rome and in the Church of England, there is nothing in the world that can be called by that name. If there were to be issued a hue and cry for Antichrist, we should certainly take up those two churches on suspicion, and they certainly would not be let loose again, for they so exactly answer the description.

Popery anywhere, whether it be Anglican or Romish, is contrary to Christ's Gospel! And it is the Antichrist, and we ought to pray against it! It should be the daily prayer of every Believer that Antichrist might be hurled like a millstone into the flood and sink to rise no more. If we can pray against error for Christ because it wounds Christ, because it robs Christ of His glory, because it puts sacramental efficacy in the place of His Atonement and lifts a piece of bread into the place of the Savior, and a few drops of water into the place of the Holy Spirit, and puts a mere fallible man like ourselves up as the vicar of Christ on earth—if we pray against it because it is against Him—we shall love the persons though we hate their errors! We shall love their souls though we loathe and detest their dogmas, and so the breath of our prayers will be sweetened because we turn our faces towards Christ when we pray. We are to pray for Him.

Do you know, dear Brothers and Sisters, it seems to me to make prayer so sweet to think that we can pray for Jesus! The Mercy Seat is inestimably precious to us when we can pray

there for ourselves. When we can bring the case of a dear child or loving friend it is a blessing for which to be perpetually grateful. Oh the blessedness of prayer! Our hearts might break for lack of a way of expressing our love if we had not this method of telling it out before the Mercy Seat on the behalf of those dear to us. But, Beloved, to think that I may pray for Christ—that I may pray for Him who prayed for me, and plead on His behalf who with sighs and tears pleaded on the behalf of poor helpless me—it ought to be a very great comfort to some of you who cannot do much else beside pray for Jesus.

I dare say you have thought, "I wish I could preach for Christ." It is a very laudable wish! Covet earnestly the best gifts. But if you feel that you cannot speak to edification and are thus debarred from that honorable exercise, you must seek another mode of service. Then you have said, "I wish I could give to Christ's cause. If He would make me His steward. If He would trust me with money, how willingly would I consecrate it to Him!" But you have no money and you are, perhaps, so poor you cannot do anything in that direction—though you would do very much if you could. Now, what a mercy it is that there is this which you can do—you can pray for Christ! You can come to the treasury and drop in your prayers, and if they are all you have, they will be like the widow's two mites which were not precious to Christ because they were mites nor because she was a widow—but because they were all her living.

Ah, if your prayers are all you can give God—and all your living—drop them into the Church's treasury, and say, "Well, I cannot do much else, but my daily constant prayer shall go up that the Lord would prosper the Gospel of His dear Son and make Him to rule and govern the wide world over." Dear Friends, here is room for questioning ourselves. Have you and I been neglectful in this form of prayer? If we have, I am persuaded that it will cast a flatness and a staleness over all our devotional exercises. If you have not prayed for Christ, I am afraid, dear Friend, that much of your own prayer will have been displeasing to God. Remember that the same Christ who tells us to say, "Give us this day our daily bread," had first given us this petition, "Hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Do not let your prayers be all about your own sins, your own needs, your own imperfections, your own trials! Let them climb the starry ladder and get up to Christ Himself! And then, as you draw near to the blood-sprinkled Mercy Seat, offer this prayer continually, "Lord, extend the kingdom of Your dear Son." Such a petition, fervently presented, will tend to elevate the spirit and tenor of our prayers.

II. In the second place, praying for Christ will suggest to us MANY THEMES OF PRAYER. To pray for Christ is a very large topic, for it will bring before us something fresh for every day in the week. I must plead for Christ's cause on earth according to its present condition and circumstances. Consequently I shall need to keep my eyes open to see in what plight the kingdom of Christ is. As a general looks along the whole line of battle and sends

reinforcements where the line appears to be most weak, so will the true man who prays for Christ look along the line of the Church's work and pray most for that which is in the worst state—offering up his prayers for Christ according as Christ's cause seems to need those prayers.

There are some topics which constantly claim our care—you may always pray for them. One is that Christ may have always enough witnesses for the Truth on earth. Your Lord has said, "Pray you the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest." It is a prayer much forgotten, but it needs to be revived in the Church before we shall see much revival. There are many Churches now that cannot find pastors. In some districts, especially in America, there are Churches by the score without ministers, and apparently they must remain so for years to come. There is a general complaint throughout all denominations of a shortage of earnest first-class men who shall devote themselves to the ministry. And this shortage will be and will increase until the Church takes it up and prays that He who ascended up on high and received gifts for men would be pleased to give her again her Apostles and ministers, her teachers and her evangelists, each according to his proper station.

We must pray for men of God, and you need never be afraid that the prayer will be needless in your lifetime, for if we had ten times as many witnesses for Christ, the world needs them. Look at China with its millions, India with its teeming masses, and even our colonies wide and far spread with a fearful lack of preachers of the Word! There are large companies of men who speak our language and who left our shores, who, for lack of teachers, are almost subsiding into heathendom and will perish for lack of knowledge unless there is a fresh host raised up of preachers of the Cross of Christ!

Pray, then, dear Friends, that God would find out and equip men to be heralds of peace to the people, and help those of us who labor even beyond our strength to aid young men whom God has called to His work to get the knowledge which their office requires. Another prayer may always go with it, namely, pray for those that are already in the field. "Brethren, pray for us," said the Apostle. If you have nothing to pray for, for yourselves, here stands one before you who needs all your prayers and feels that he needs them, and humbly with his whole heart begs you to let him live in your private devotions.

Brethren, we are rich when you enrich us with your supplications! We are strong when you strengthen us with your prayers! A few loving tears shed for us in private will be of more value to us than anything else you can possibly bestow upon us. Some of my Brethren are fainting from lack of success—hundreds of them are growing cold because of the coldness of the church members who surround them. Some of them are struggling with poverty—all of us, alas, are too weak for the work we have engaged in! Pray for us! You are praying for Christ, and if we are His servants—if He has truly sent us—you pray for the Master's business when you pray that the servants may do that business well. You pray for the Owner of the vineyard when you ask that the trimmers of the vines may know how to execute their tasks.

And when these two prayers have passed from your hearts to your lips, there is another—pray that God would open doors of utterance to us among the people. Ask that God would send the spirit of hearing throughout this city to begin with, and then throughout all England. It is poor gain that you have the preachers unless the people will listen—the trumpet sounds in vain if men stop their ears! God can, in a moment, as we know by past experience, influence people to say, "Come and let us go up to the house of the Lord."

I believe that through the last visitation of the cholera there is a spirit of hearing in London such as has not been for many years. Thank God for this! Ask that a desire to hear may be continued and increased. Intercede with the great Lord of All that in every country the hearing ear may be bestowed—that God's faithful servants may be cheerfully received and be enabled to accomplish their errand with a hundred-fold success. But, my Brothers and Sisters, I have only opened the bag. I have only commenced the list of matters for which you could pray if you would really pray for Christ! I would ask you, then, to pray especially for the conversion of many souls. This is Christ's delight, His love, His heart's joy.

You were told last Sunday morning that there was "joy in Heaven over one sinner that repents." The angels sing, but Christ is the Choirmaster there. He is the chief Musician, for He has the greatest joy! It is His joy, His Heaven to see sinners saved! Pray, pray for Him, then! You are praying for the Shepherd when you pray for the lost sheep. You are praying for the King when you ask that the lost jewels of His crown may be found and set therein! Oh that we loved souls as Christ loves them! Then we would hunger and thirst after their salvation! Oh for the tender heart of the weeping Savior, that no soul might go down to Hell not sprinkled with our tears!

Brethren, pray for those who are saved, or who make a profession of it, that they may be kept from falling into sin. You are in an eminent degree praying for Christ when you offer such an intercession, for He is crucified afresh when professors fall. If I had an offer now of losing this right arm or having to endure in this Church some such falls as we have had to mourn over, and as the world has seen of late among high professors, I do feel I can say without hypocrisy I would choose to be cut limb from limb sooner than see those whom I have loved and honored fall from the faith. It is a bitter thing to us, who are ministers of Christ—it is our curse and plague—it costs us sleepless nights and miserable days when we hear of those that apparently did run well but turn back to the world!

Pray for professors that they fall not! And as you hope to be kept yourselves, I charge you pray for every tempted soul that his faith fail him not in the trying hour. Forget not to pray for the Church of God that it may be knit together in one. Do not ask that it may be made uniform—that is neither desirable nor probable—but pray that all Christians may be one as the Father is one with the Son. That is, one in spirit, so that we, divided as we always shall be as to our thoughts upon many points, may be one in the hope that animates us—in the spirit that actuates us. Pray that we may be one in the life of God that pulsates in our

souls. Pray that the Churches may be knit together in holy love and may strive together for nothing but the advancement of the faith of Christ.

Nor have I done. When you have thus prayed for Christ, and I am sure it is all for Christ if you so pray, then ask that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. Let no ideas of doctrine check you in such a prayer—you are bound to pray it! The example of Prophets and of Apostles urges you forward! Your allegiance to King Jesus should constrain you to it. You believe that He will come, but believe also the Truth of God which is equally certain that He shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river even to the ends of the earth.

Though you may not be able to reconcile that universal reign with the other Truth of His coming as a thief in the night, do not try to reconcile it! Believe it because you find it in the Bible and, believing it, pray that you may see it. Do not indulge the thought that Christ is not to reign in China. That He is not to be King where the gods of the heathens rule. My Brothers and Sisters, He is to be so! Do not think He has only suffered upon Calvary to gather out a few from among men! The day is coming when He shall gather out a multitude that no man can number—who shall be His in the day of His appearing. Pray for this. Pray for the all-conquering progress of the Gospel of King Jesus!

Do not restrict your thoughts and limit your desires. Be ambitious for Christ. Nothing but universal monarchy ought to content you, as only it will content the Master. The little stone cut out of the mountain without hands must fill the whole earth, and every other image, though it is an image of gold or iron, shall be broken in pieces before the dominion of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ! Pray for it, my Brothers and Sisters! Pray for it day and night, and let the verse of Dr. Watts be true of you—

"For Him shall endless prayer be made, And praises throng to crown His head."

Thus I have tried to show you that this doctrine of praying for Christ instructs us in a variety of topics. I should again like to ask the question, whether you really have been up to the mark in this—whether there has not been a good deal of negligence upon many of these points? I am afraid I shall have to confess negligence myself, and perhaps most of you will. But do not let us remain satisfied with confession! Let us ask for Divine Grace that our prayers, from now on, shall be larger, wider, broader, more heavenly, more generous, more like the thoughts of the Infinite Mind, while we chiefly, and above all things, remember the work, and interest, and cause of Christ! As He remembers us, so let us remember Him.

III. Thirdly, it appears to me that if we were to look upon our prayers as being in a great measure prayers for Christ, this would tend to inspire us with PECULIAR EARNESTNESS. I must pray for Christ or else I am not consistent with my profession. I profess to be His servant. What? And not ask for the success of my Master? I avow myself to be His disciple—a disciple, and not anxious that the Truths which I receive from my Teacher should win their way? I call myself His friend. He calls me so in return—a Friend—and not show myself

friendly enough to put up a word of prayer for Him? He has said I am His brother—a brother who does not pray for his brother is most unbrotherly! Moreover, He has deigned to call the collective body of His people His spouse—a spouse that does not pray for her husband is most unwifely. We must not so act if we are Christians in deed and in truth.

One of the first marks of Christians was that they met together and sung hymns in the honor of one called Christ. And another mark is that they meet together and pray for the extension of the kingdom of one whom they called Jesus. I have a second reason for so praying, namely, that gratitude dictates to me to pray. Oh, what has Jesus done for me! When I am praying for His Church I am apt to think of her faults, perhaps of her unkindness to me, and my prayer lacks force. But when I pray for Christ, so good, so tender, so self-denying, laying down His life for His sheep. When I think of His bleeding out that life for me—for me a sinner and once His enemy—how can I but pray for Him? Pray for You, Jesus? This is but a poor return for all Your groans and bloody sweat and agony for me.

I think I shall love prayer better than I have ever done if I am able to remember that I can speak a word in God's ear for Him whose blood speaks for me! It will be a delightful satisfaction for me in my times of communion with my Father who is in Heaven to say to Him—"and, my Father, there is One whom You love, who died on my behalf, though I deserved it not, and I pray You glorify Him. Increase His kingdom! Help me to honor Him. Cause human hearts to feel His power. Give Him dominion over tens of thousands of the sons of men."

Does it not, dear Friend, quicken the pulse of your prayer? Do you think it possible to pray at a sluggish rate when you pray for Jesus? I have heard some people say, "I could not speak upon any subject but one," and that one subject has been some kind friend who helped them in time of trouble. "Oh," they say, "I could speak about him! That is a topic I could always find words upon." Someone to whom you are grateful holds a key with which to unloose your tongue. And if you cannot pray for anything else, surely you can, you must, you shall pray for the Lord Jesus! As both our consistency and our gratitude will thus quicken us to prayer if we pray for Christ, surely our love to Him will tend to do the same.

Loved of Christ from before all worlds, we love Him in return. We never pray more fervently, I suppose, than for those whom we love best. He who does not love sinners cannot pray aright for them. When we love sinners, then the prayer is fervent. And when we love Jesus, then will the prayer be earnest. Love is the flaming torch to kindle the pile of our devotions. Brethren, we have something more than love to Christ. We are, if we are true Believers, one with Him— members of His body. All that concerns Him concerns us, not because we are partners merely, but because we are part and parcel of Himself. There is but one Christ, and His Church is one with Him.

We, members of His Church, are each one in living union with Him. No man, says Paul, ever yet hated his own flesh! Now, if I, professing to be a Christian, were to neglect Christ,

I should be neglecting myself since He takes me into union with Himself. Do I ask that His kingdom may come? It is a kingdom in which I am to reign! Do I ask that His glory may be increased? It is a glory of which I am to be a partaker! Do I crave that His joy may be full? That joy is to be in me! How can I but pray when I am one with the Savior for whom I put up my supplications?

I am afraid I cannot put what I mean into words which carry it home to you. But to my own mind it is like a wafer made with honey which I can roll under my tongue and enjoy in its sweetness, to think that I have the possibility of pleading for Jesus! I feel convinced that it has a tendency to blow up the flame of prayer. I trust that the man who traveled slowly before will all at once put on his speed when he comes to pray for Christ Jesus.

IV. Very briefly, in the fourth place. If I can look at my prayers in the light which has been mentioned, it will tend very much to give me SPECIAL ENCOURAGEMENT in offering them at the Mercy Seat. He who has to present a petition will go with great confidence when he feels that the person for whom he makes intercession is exceedingly well worthy. Brothers and Sisters, if I pray for a guilty sinner I may have confidence. But when I pray for such a One as the Lord Jesus, my confidence can have no bounds set to it! Observe what He is! He is in constant favor with God. "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

From the excellence of His Character and the dignity of His Person, He deserves to be the Beloved of His Father, and He is such. He is God's well-beloved. It is easy work, then, to plead for Him. Now, if I pray for my minister, for the Church, for the conversion of sinners, I may feel a little difficulty. But when I can make sure that I am praying for these for Christ's sake and with a view to His honor—and am thus virtually praying for Christ—why then, if enabled by the Holy Spirit, it becomes easy to pray because I know I must succeed when I am asking honor for Him whom the King delights to honor!

Brethren, when I think upon the merits of Christ in the matter of His mediatorial sufferings, how it encourages me to pray! I ask that He may be crowned who was obedient to death, even the death of the Cross. Can this be denied? Is not the crown well earned? Can the reward be withheld? I ask that the pierced hand may be filled with the scepter, and that the feet once nailed to the Cross may be planted upon earth's dominions as upon a footstool. Can it be refused? Am I not asking that which His merit deserves? Which His triumph claims and wins? In this case I have something more to plead, I have God's promise. It is written, "He shall see His seed. He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands."

It is easy work to pray when we are grounded and bottomed, as to our desires, upon God's own promise! How can He that gave the word refuse to keep it? Immutable veracity cannot demean itself by a lie! And eternal faithfulness cannot degrade itself by neglect. God must bless His Son—His covenant binds Him to it. That which the Spirit prompts us to ask for Jesus is that which God decrees to give Him! Brothers and Sisters, whenever you are

praying for the kingdom of Christ, let your eyes behold the dawning of the blessed day which draws near when the Crucified shall receive His coronation in the place where men rejected Him! The cause of Christ is downtrodden now—it shall not be so forever.

We have been for centuries like soldiers that keep the field against a foe inveterate and mighty. We have been wearily waiting in the trenches. We have been mournfully standing behind the bulwarks. But the day is coming when the Master shall say to us what the Hebrew Prophet said to Israel's tribes at the Red Sea, "Forward, forward!" And then we will be no longer merely keeping the ground but winning province after province for King Jesus! No longer storing our arrows in our quivers that they may be ready for the onslaught—but fitting them to the string and sending them like a mighty shower—we shall march to triumph and to universal victory!

Courage, you that prayerfully work and toil for Christ with success of the very smallest kind! It shall not be so always. Better times are before you. Your eyes cannot see the blissful future! Borrow the telescope of faith. Wipe the misty breath of your doubts from the glass. Look through it and see the coming glory! Messiah's kingdom comes! The trumpet soon shall sound! Peace shall be proclaimed! His saints shall reign in joy! Before long the millennial era shall begin and Jesus shall have His own.

Behold Him reigning upon the throne of His father David. The kings of the Isles bring him presents, Sheba and Seba offer Him their gifts. It must be so, Brethren! Christ has not died merely to win this little island, and a few other nations! He has died to redeem this whole round world as a jewel which He will wear in His crown, and He shall have it! I say the whole round world yet shall shine like a pearl in His diadem! He must, He shall reign over all nations till every enemy is put under foot. The sails that whiten every sea shall bear His messengers to the islands of the South. The caravans that cross the desert shall convey His ambassadors to proclaim in the far-off oasis or among the wandering Bedouins His sacred name. The gates of brass which deny Him entrance must be broken! The bars of iron that shut out His heralds from any land must be snapped.

Hoary systems of superstition must crumble and the moles and bats shall yet be the sole companions of the gods of heathendom. Rejoice, rejoice! The cause for which you plead is one which Heaven ordains to bless! Everlasting decrees stand like lions to guard the throne of Christ! The mighty arm of the Most High is made bare to avenge His own elect. High shall the banner of the Cross be lifted! Soon shall the shout of victory make Heaven's loftiest arches ring and Hell itself shall tremble at the dreaded sound—for the King immortal, eternal, invisible, must reign and put down all dominion and power—and then shall He give the kingdom to God, even the Father.

V. In closing, the last thought which occurred to me was this—when we put our prayer in such a light that we pray for Christ it DEMANDS CONSISTENT ACTION. I cannot pray for Christ and then rise from my knees and go and sin against the very kingdom which I

hope to spread! I ask you what is it but damnable hypocrisy for a man to say, "Your kingdom come," and then to go out, and by inconsistent conduct, pull down the walls of Zion? What shall I say of that professor whose daily life in ordinary business is a continual splattering the Gospel with mud, and yet he says, "Your kingdom come"? Away with the hypocritical lips which can honor Christ in public, when the hands, the true token of the heart, will afterwards privately pluck down the Cross!

Ah, my Hearers, how many professors do this! How many who even give and contribute liberally will afterwards, in the way in which they get their money, or seek to get it, or in the conduct of their daily business, or in their families, bring infinitely more discredit upon religion than their contributions can ever bring honor to the Cross? If you pray for Christ, live like He lived! If you profess to desire His prosperity, do not, I pray you, cause Him to be wounded in the house of His friends!

But further, this is not enough. If I really pray for Christ I must take care to be on my watch to know what to pray for, so as to make my prayer a sensible prayer—a prayer of the understanding. Some members of the Church do not know what the Church needs at the present moment. They could not plead for Sunday schools, for they never take the trouble to enquire into their present condition. Could some of you pray for our own school as it should be prayed for? You could pray a sort of general hit-or-miss prayer, but you do not know whether the Sunday school is well attended. You do not know whether the teachers are godly young men and women and knit together in love, or whether they are all divided and split into factions.

We ought to know, as Church members, it seems to me, something about all the agencies—but all about some one agency in which we take particular concern. And we should get to be acquainted with the condition of the Church of which we are members. And also, as far as our means will allow us, we should be acquainted with the condition of the Church of God at large. We should take interest in it, feeling that it is our own concern. And then when we pray we should pray with better spirit, understanding what we are asking for. Then, Friends, if we did this we are not afraid but what the last thing would be well attended to, namely, that we should take care that we add to our prayers our continual personal service.

The old fable of the priest who would not give the man a farthing but would give him his prayers, is very like many professors. They pray for the kingdom, but what are they doing? Many young men who are quietly at home in England ought to be missionaries abroad! Many others who are following their calling successfully ought to have devoted themselves to the ministry. And there are many Christian men who are making money for themselves who have got enough and ought to shut up shop for themselves and keep shop for Christ—they ought to make money for Christ with as much earnestness as I would preach the Gospel for Christ!

I have no doubt that many would thus serve the Master far more eminently than do half the professed preachers. Oh, if you are not doing something for Jesus let your closets chide you! Let your hymns, which you have been singing about His coming and His triumph—let them provoke you! But oh, my Brothers and Sisters, instead of appealing to all these considerations, I shall put it upon this footing—by Him who loved you, if, indeed, He loved you! By Him who died for you, if, indeed, you have a share in His passion! By Him who lives for you, if, indeed, you have been quickened together with Him! By Him who pleads for you this day before the Eternal Throne, if, indeed, your names are on His breastplate—I do charge you—live to Jesus!

Live now to Him! Live while you live! Live with all the possible energy of life! Let the love of Christ be an all-consuming passion with you! Find out some way in which to increase His kingdom. Ah, my Hearers, I bless God for you because the most of you are serving Him. I rejoice in you! You are the jewels of my crown of rejoicing because you do serve the Master! Many of you live even Apostolic lives in your eagerness to spread abroad the Truth of God! But alas, some of you I might speak of "even weeping," because you are indifferent and almost dead to the blessed power of love within the soul!

May God revive us all! May the Holy Spirit constrain us to more consecrated living! I am in hopes that the Prayer Meetings held every morning and evening will be the means of bringing the Church into a warm-hearted, happy, holy, earnest state and that there will not be one left among us whose soul shall have been so dead as never to himself have said, "This is my work. Christ is my King. And now I will live for Him and pray for Him in the hope that I may at last die and be with Him where He is, and behold His glory—the glory which His Father gave Him—and be one with Him in Heaven forever and ever!"